DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 388 327 JC 950 510

TITLE	Survey of Ethnic/Racial Minority Students Enrolled Fall Semester 1993, Kent State University Trumbull Campus.
INSTITUTION	Kent State Univ., Warren, OH. Office of Institutional Research.
PUB DATE	Mar 94
NOTE	13p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Access to Education; *College Environment; *Educational Objectives; Educational Opportunities; *Ethnic Groups; *Financial Needs; *Minority Groups; Multicampus Colleges; Outreach Programs; Participant Satisfaction; *Student Attitudes; Student Needs; Student Recruitment; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	Kent State University OH Trumbull Campus

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at the Trumbull Campus of Ohio's Kent State University to determine the financial aid status, college experiences, academic goals, and level of satisfaction of the 178 ethnic/racial minority students enrolled in fall 1993. A total of 75 students or 42% of the minority student population completed the survey, which also asked the students to provide suggestions for improving campus services and recruitment of minority population members. Study results included the following: (1) the most frequent reason cited by respondents for choosing the school was location; (2) 53% of those surveyed indicated that they planned to transfer; (3) 69% said that they were receiving one or more types of financial aid, while 28% indicated that they were experiencing financial difficulties; (4) with respect to perceptions of the campus, the quality of teaching received the highest number of "excellent" ratings (37 respondents), while a large number were not using the career planning services; and (5) course content and offerings received the highest number of "poor" and "very poor" ratings at 25 and 4, respectively. Based on student comments, it was evident that the campus was a less-than-friendly environment for minority students. Recommendations for improving the climate include sensitivity training workshops for staff and faculty, offering courses to explore different ultural heritages, and public relations and outreach programs to increase community minority awareness of the campus. (Student responses to the survey are attached.) (TGI)

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ED 388 327

Survey of Ethnic/Racial Minority Students

Enrolled Fall Semester 1993

Kent State University Trumbull Campus

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March 1994

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Summary and Recommendations

Survey of the Minority Student Population
Kent State University Trumbull Campus
Fall Semester 1993

Students from ethnic and racial minorities represented 9% of the enrolled students at Kent Trumbull in the Fall semester 1993.

FALL SEMESTER 1993 MINORITY STUDENT POPULATION	
153	African American
5	Asian/Pacific Islander
4	Native American
16	Hispanic

The survey of enrolled students from minority ethnic/racial backgrounds does provide us with some important information on the perceptions and experiences of minority students.

The survey was designed to solicit information from students who identified themselves as being in an ethnic/racial category in the minority in American society. The survey asked students information about their financial aid status, their college experiences and academic plans and goals. Student were also asked to provide their suggestions for improving campus services and our recruitment of minority population members.

The responses of students identified the following categories as barriers to achieving academic goals. These responses coincide with those barriers identified by the general student population.

Barriers to Academic Goals

Time & work	15	Advisors	3
Finances	11	Unqualified teachers	3
Family Responsibilities	8	Kent Doesn't Accept Credits	1
Traveling	5	Lack of Courses	3
Academic skills	5		

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Students indicated that the most frequent reason for choosing Kent Trumbull was location. The next most frequently identified reasons were specific academic programs, cost ,small campus size and campus environment .

Other specific reasons for choosing Kent Trumbull included such things as the semester system, the nursing program, the GM apprentice program, cost, and the TCI program.

Students were asked to rate campus services. Of the campus functions teaching received the highest ratings, with services the next highest overall. Career Planning services were used the least and consequently received the lowest rating.

Students reported pursuing a wide variety of majors. The following is a list of the most frequently identified majors:

Mechanical engineering	Electrical Engineering
Pre education	Pre Business
Psychology	Nursing
Business management	Undecided

Forty students or 53% of those surveyed indicated planning to transfer. Students named the institutions to which they were planning to transfer, The Kent campus was the overwhelming choice of students.

Students were asked two open ended questions: (1) about improving existing services and (two) regarding the improvement of recruitment efforts. From student comments several issues are dominant for students from ethnic and racial minorities. **For many minority students the campus continues to be an environment that is less than friendly**. Several students commented on feeling left out, excluded and alienated.

Below is a list (not prioritized) of recommendations for action based on the analysis of the minority student survey data.

1. **A re-articulation of the campus values for acceptance of cultural/racial differences and for access to and participation in higher education by all members of society.**

2. Periodic reviews of campus services, programs, activities, policies and procedures to address any prejudicial or discriminatory component.

3. Staff, faculty in service workshops designed to assist us in maintaining our sensitivity to ethnic/racial minority issues.

4. Development of an educational program for student leaders designed to assist in personal growth and understanding in responding to ethnic/racial minority issues.

5. Offering courses whose purpose is to explore different cultural/racial heritages.

6. Develop a mentor program for minority students.

7. Maintain close relationships with minority community leaders.

8. Design and implement a public relations information education campaign with the goal of increasing community minority populations awareness and understanding of:

    Campus academic programs
    University Application procedure
    Financial Aid opportunities and application procedures

9. Identify and develop scholarship opportunities for talented students who are members of minority groups.

10. Outreach programs that target specific sub groups in a population ie. parents, fifth and six graders, public schools, churches

We need to ask ourselves " Are we creating an environment that encourages inclusion of all of our students ? ". Our diligence in assessing both the intent and the effect of our enterprise is essential for us to maintain a direction for the campus that reflects the values of access to and support for the minority members of our society in the higher education process.

Survey of Enrolled Minority Students
Spring Semester 1994

Understanding the experience of students from under-represented populations is a key to creating a campus atmosphere that accepts and values the differences in students. Our objective is to understand the college experience of students from various backgrounds, different values, beliefs and cultural heritages. As we better understand and value the uniqueness of students' experiences, we can more effectively address specific needs and barriers to students' attainment of their academic goals. Also, through these continued efforts to grasp and appreciate the influences of the distinctive aspects of students cultural heritage, race and experiences, we can promote a campus community that values and accepts individual differences.

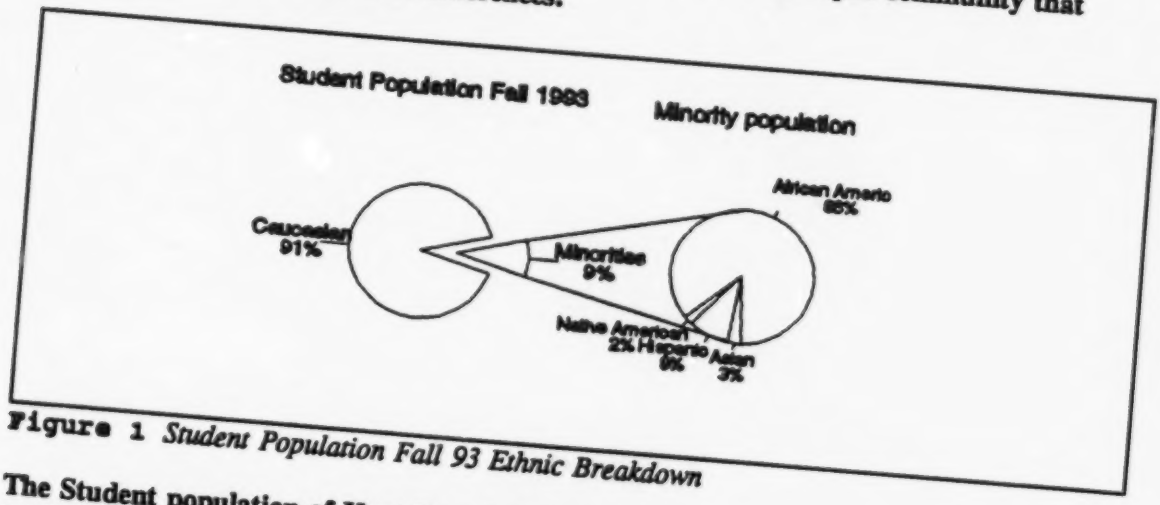

Figure 1 *Student Population Fall 93 Ethnic Breakdown*

The Student population of Kent Trumbull totaled 2028 in the fall semester 1993. Of that total student population 178 students identified themselves as belonging to a minority group. Figure I depicts the breakdown of student ethnic identification for the fall semester 1993. A survey was designed to discover uniqueness in the university experiences of students from the following ethnic/racial heritages:

Ethnic/Racial Groups Surveyed	
African American	Asian/Pacific Islander
Native American/Alaskan	Hispanic

A total of 75 students completed surveys representing 42% of the total minority student population in the fall semester 1993.

Enrolled		Surveyed
153	African American	69
5	Asian/Pacific Islander	3
4	Native American	0
16	Hispanic	3

It is not assumed that students from different under represented ethnic/racial heritage groups have the same experiences or needs however; the survey results did not glean unique responses from the different groups. The survey's open ended questions allowed students the opportunity to express their individual views and concerns regarding aspects of their specific experience as student minorities. It should also be noted that the African American population represents 88% of respondents.

Students were asked if they were receiving financial aid. Fifty two or 69% said they were receiving one or more types of financial aid. Students identified the sources of their financial as:

PELL	38	General Motors Program	6
OIG	22	Tuition Reimbursement	5
Plus Loan	2	Navy	1
Stafford	15	PIC	2
Scholarship	2	BVR	1

Twenty one or 28% of the minority students surveyed indicated they were experiencing financial difficulties. Eighteen of those students who said they were having financial difficulties also indicated they were seeking financial assistance.
specific barriers have you experienced in pursuing your academic goals?

Student Identified Barriers to Academic Achievement

Traveling	5	Lack of Courses	3
Time & Work	1	Courses/time Contrast	3
Finances	9	Advisors	2
Late Pay.	2	Unqualified Teachers	3
Illness	1	Learn Disabled	1
Divorce	1	Skill Problem	1
Family Resp.	6	Skills Center	1
Kent Accept Credits	1	No Counselor	1

Students were asked to give reasons for choosing Kent Trumbull. The responses of minority students mirrors those of the larger population as to reasons for choosing Kent Trumbull. The most often sighted reason for choosing the campus is location. This coincides with other surveys of different populations of students, consistently the most often mentioned reason for choosing Kent Trumbull is its close location to home and work. Other factors minority students identified as influencing their decisions to attend the campus reveal that for minority students, as with the student population in general, the campus environment and class size are important considerations in their choice of institutions. Additionally important for minority students are those programs which are

Major reasons minority students identified for choosing Kent Trumbull

A. Location	62	E. Parents	6
B. Size	21	F. Spouse	4
C. Cost	14	G. Campus environment	18
D. Specific program	17		

Other factors influencing students decisions to attend Kent Trumbull

Kent Has Semesters	Can take L.E.R.'s
Being Incarcerated	Trumbull is cheaper
Nursing	More personable environment
GM Apprentice program	

unique to or have a strong reputation at Kent State University and/or Kent Trumbull.

Minority students identified academic majors as being:

Mechanical engineering	6	Family Consumer Studies	2
Pre education	5	Business Administration	2
Psychology	4	Nursing	8
Business management	6	Theater	1
Speech Pathology	1	Occupational Therapy	1
Electrical Engineering	7	Physical Therapy	3
Political Science	1	English	1
Industrial Engineering	1	Pre Dentistry	1
General Studies	2	Undecided	7
Office Technology	2	Pre medicine	2
Criminal Justice	3	Graphic Design	1
Pre Business	7	Sociology	1
		Human Services	1

Students were asked if they were planning to transfer to another institution. Forty students or 53% of those surveyed indicated they were planning to transfer. Students identified the institutions to which as those to which they were planning to transfer:

Kent Campus	28	Youngstown State University	6
Ohio State University	1	University of Cincinnati	1
Georgia State University	1	Road Island	1
Florida	1	Thiel	1

The information on student transfer plans reveals that minority students are largely committed to their Kent State University programs of study. Though there is no directly comparable survey data this seems to be higher for this population of students than for the general student population.

Students were asked to rate aspects of the campus on a scale of very poor; poor; good and; excellent..

	Excellent	Good	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Services	21	42	9	2	1
Financial Aid	25	25	9	3	13
Courses	18	27	25	4	1
Career Planning	15	12	8	1	39
Teaching	37	31	7	0	0
Advising	23	35	14	0	3
Support	23	32	13	2	5
Students	24	33	17	0	3

The student rating of the various campus enterprises gives us few clear conclusions about how students perceive their campus experiences. We can say that this population of students rates the teaching quality very high. We can also say that a large number of minority students are not using the services of the Career Planning Center. Students have some dissatisfaction with the course content and course offering. Though this seems to be a prevailing trend among all students, further study will have to done to determine the exact cause of dissatisfaction. Generally, students were satisfied with campus services, these ratings compare closely to the perceptions of the wider student population.

Summery of Student Responses

Additional advertising with Black organizations, Urban leagues, churches, radio, Fairs, schools	24
Offer cultural related courses:	21
Hire more minority personnel	5
Use minority alumni testimonies	4
Improve Financial Aid information	8
Student senate needs training on minority issues	3
Start recruiting students younger	3
Inform parents	2
Address racism	5
Better Elevator	1
Advisor training on minority needs	2
Scholarships to attract special talented minorities	1
Provide transportation	1
Offer Bachelor degree courses	2

Student Survey Responses.

African Americans don't know what's out there for them. Kent needs to spread out into the community by broadcasting on Hubbard 101.9 radio, Black churches, Urban leagues, and Fairs.

Offer more Black culture classes.

Need more early daytime African courses. Many students are close minded to African culture.

Needs to clarify more clearly what's available to African American (the financial and support availability)

Need to know why science classes are only on Monday and Wednesday because these classes overlap other important classes.

Kent needs to show high school students more on how financial aid works so they know what to do when time for college.

Kent is doing their best.

Can't force students to college, they need the desire to better themselves.

Offer more grants to African American specific needs.

Need to be more receptive to non-traditional students.

Offer more Bachelor & Master degree courses to non-traditional students in evening.

Offer more African American classes.

More publicity in African American community

Need to inform High Schools more on financial services, individual class discussions and pass out brochures.

Need to make parents more aware of Kent's services in the public schools.

Feel prejudices from Kent students.

Need more minority teachers in evenings

Kent needs to make an effort to hire more full-time African American personnel-so that African American students have someone to confide in. Put pictures of staff in hall ways for all student to see.

Need to get the higher education message to 5th and 6th graders

Need an Upward Bound program on campus for children.

Need more campus exposure in the African American community

Need to educate all students about racial issues

Kent needs to educate the parents how important it is for child to get an education. It starts at home.

Need to distribute more information into public schools directly.

Need scholarships for special talented minorities.

We need an aggressive P.R. program to recruit gifted students who are unable to receive financial aid. Give opportunity where opportunity is deserved.

Newspaper, radio, and TV: Need to broadcast more on the opportunities of Kent.

Need to get together the Alumni for a community meeting, to hear alumni's testimonies to inspire black students.

Parents need to see importance of college; the influential part of a child is the parent.

Offer more Black culture courses.

Offer more courses in Broadcast Journalism.

Need to find more grants for specific needs for minorities.

Break down payments in smaller increments so to be more affordable.

Offer more upper division classes so students don't have to travel to other Universities.

Need more community advertising.

Would like to see more minority teachers.

More advertising to community.

Would like to see more Black culture courses available.

Offer Black studies.

Set a booth or workshop to have representative speak to students of minority in community.

Bring minority alumni in to influence high school students.

Offer more forums to new students.

Have a Black student council meeting.

Visit more public junior and high schools

Black history month; the importance has faded away.

Black history month identifies separation which we don 't need.

More programs to enlighten us about minorities.

Support Black studies and other minorities.

Offer more African studies, ex. Swahili.

Finances stops most African Americans from getting an education, would attend college if they knew the availability of finances.

Offer more classes in African American culture and history.

Words from minority alumni on how they liked the program.

Letting community know what types of grants and other financial aid is offered.

Offer more African American classes.

Offer better elevator for students in wheelchairs. Aisles in book store needs widened for example.

Offer transportation to ones who needs transportation.

Include minority students in student senate meetings

Offer more diverse courses.

Advisors need to be more helpful in planning classes and take more time in directing goals.

Need more information on financial aid than what is communicated.

Make us feel more welcome.

Offer classes of Black culture and hire more African American instructors.

Should have a student body group to involve Blacks.

Allow students to play up to date music more often and not be criticized and cut down about their generations music. Make students happy so they can spread the word in

recruitment programs.

Need to offer more courses of diverse minorities other than the African American.

Have an alumni meeting of minorities on how they made it.

Teachers should have more consideration for minorities.

Change Kent's advertisements -white and minority groups should be visible to promote more of a unified Kent State University.

Kent needs to scan the inner city high school students to make them aware of what Kent has to offer.

I think the recommended cultural courses stink.

Kent emphasizes too much on the Black culture and not enough on other minorities.